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UNCLAS HARARE 000336

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EB/CBA Michael A. Garcia

E. O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: Mission Assistance to U.S. Business

Ref: State 29441

1. Reftel asks us to summarize efforts to assist U.S. businesses, including success cases, here in Zimbabwe. Because of our strained bilateral relations, it is often not practical for the Embassy to advocate on behalf U.S. businesses. We have lobbied the GOZ, thus far unsuccessfully, to return farms or offer compensation to several Amcit farmers, whose land has been seized under fast-track land reform.

2. In our daily dealings with U.S. firms and through the American Business Association, which we presently administer, we have let the American business community know that we are available to provide any level of support. Most of our daily assistance does not rise to the "success story" level, however. We sporadically provide gold-key service in conjunction with the U.S. Commercial Service, but given the paucity of new foreign direct investment in Zimbabwe (FDI inflows have dropped from US\$ 444 to 3 million in the last 5 years), this is not a big part of our workload. For that reason, our role is slightly different than that of our counterparts in more stable economies. Most U.S. companies are merely trying to tread water rather than expand business.

Sullivan